

Special Representative

To:

PA President

and

PA Secretary General

March 10, 2020

PC Brief Weeks 4 - 10, 2020

During these weeks there have been six meetings by the Permanent Council (PC) and five of the Forum for Security Cooperation (FSC), plus a joint meeting between both bodies. In addition, there has been a high number of meetings of committees and other informal bodies, as well as the Annual Implementation Assessment Meeting (AIAM). Reinhold Lopatka, Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on Countering Terrorism (CCT) contributed as a key-note speaker to the Regional High-Level OSCE-UNOCT Conference on Foreign Terrorist Fighters. Moreover, the Special Representative on Fighting Corruption, Irene Charalambides, addressed the First Preparatory Meeting of the 2020 OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum (EEF) in Vienna and 3rd Committee Chair, Kyriakos Hadjiyiannis, addressed the Human Dimension Committee.

The OSCE PA also held its Winter Meeting. Office staff were again engaged in many PA activities outside of Vienna: Tim Knoblaue accompanied the PA President to Baku, Freya Koçi participated in the visit of the PA President and Secretary General to the USA, Francesco Pagani accompanied Vice President Kristian Vigenin to the Anti-Semitism Conference in Tirana and Special Representative on South East Europe, Mark Pritchard to Greece, together with Ilias Trochidis, and I headed the PA staff for the Election Observation Mission in Azerbaijan.

While there was a plethora of meetings, the participating States are yet to find a consensus on this year's budget, and – apart from setting the date of the Annual Exchange of Military Information - no decisions have been taken in the decision-making bodies. The OSCE has been operating on a provisional budget since 1st January and can continue like this for some time, but the SMM will need to have a new budget by April 1st. The discussions in the PC have become more heated again, mostly as a consequence of the increase in cease-fire violations in Donbas. Also, the polemics between other parties to conflicts in the OSCE area have increased. Despite this, and despite fundamental differences regarding the Structured Dialogue and the relationship between the proposals for a revision of the Vienna Document and the AIAM (even between countries that usually have common positions) both events saw more discussions on substance than in the past.

The OSCE's almost forgotten structure, the OSCE Court of Conciliation and Arbitration, made a presentation at the PC on the occasion of the election of Emmanuel Decaux (France) as President of the Court, pointing out the advantage of having this tool in the OSCE's toolbox. The President also paid a visit to the Vienna Office, offering to brief the members of the Parliamentary Assembly about the Court.

In a meeting with the new Head of the Centre for OSCE Research (CORE), Dr. Cornelius Friesendorf (Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy at the University of Hamburg - IFSH), his Deputy, Dr. Frank Evers, and the leader of a project on "the OSCE and China", Prof. Dr. Stefan Wolff, the representatives of CORE, which coordinates the OSCE Academic Network, also reiterated their interest in a close cooperation with the OSCE PA.



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Ambassador